

our theaters, our educational children's programs, our museums, our dance companies, our poets, ourselves.

Ultimately, we are judged by the heritage we leave our children. I hope we leave them more than soap operas and talk shows, attack submarines and assault rifles, gangs and drugs!

Yes, Mr. Speaker, to be or not to be civilized; that is the question.

LET US NOT BEGIN A WAR ON THE POOR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. FRANKS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRANKS of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, affirmative action affects mostly African-Americans.

Welfare? Almost half of the recipients are African-Americans.

Forty-six percent of black children are deemed poor, thus a number of food programs are more frequently used by African-Americans.

Most of the people in public housing are African-Americans.

As we continue to address these issues, the question is, Mr. Speaker, are we, as a Congress, looking at constructive changes or merely attacks toward African-Americans and the poor? Sadly, Mr. Speaker, at this point I am not quite sure.

It should be noted that to change human behavior one would use sticks and carrots, rewards and punishments. Using sticks only to alter behavior would cause one to earn the mean-spirited label.

Let us remember that we help our Nation by strengthening our weakest link, not by crushing it. Being compassionate toward the less fortunate is not a liberal or a conservative concept.

The Democrat-led War on Poverty was a failure back during the 1960's. Let us not begin a war on the poor.

THE RICKY RAY HEMOPHILIA RELIEF FUND ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I and 21 of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle took the first concrete steps toward righting a terrible wrong, by introducing the Ricky Ray Hemophilia Relief Fund Act of 1995. This bill addresses the suffering of approximately 8,000 people with hemophilia-associated AIDS and their families. The premise behind this legislation is simple: The Federal Government must assume partial responsibility for what happened to these people because it failed to respond to the warning signs that blood products sold in this country were contaminated with the deadly virus that causes AIDS. It's time for accountability. The facts of this tragedy are horrifying. During the years 1980 through 1987, despite medical ad-

vances that could have wiped out contaminants of blood products sold to hemophilia suffers, contaminated products continued to flood the marketplace and approximately 8,000 people with blood-clotting disorders became infected with HIV. Among the victims was a young Florida boy named Ricky Ray. He and his two brothers suffered from the hereditary blood-clotting disease known as hemophilia, an illness that makes people vulnerable to potentially life-threatening bleeding episodes. The brothers Ray—and thousands of people like them—hailed blood-clotting products known as factor as a tremendous medical breakthrough that would change their lives forever. But there was a dark side to this new wonder treatment—and that was the transmission of dangerous blood-borne viruses, such as hepatitis and eventually HIV. As a result, all of the Ray brothers became HIV-positive—and in December 1992 Ricky—the eldest of the three—died of AIDS at the age of 15. Before his death, Ricky courageously spoke out and became a national symbol of this terrible situation. He inspired many of his peers to tell their stories and begin seeking answers from the Federal Government and the blood industry. I am saddened that he did not live to see the day when legislation would be introduced in his honor, but we know his brothers, his sister, his parents, and the extended family of friends he established around the country, all recognize the enormous contribution he made in his very short life. The Ricky Ray Hemophilia Relief Fund Act establishes a fund of \$1 billion from which victims of this tragedy could collect \$125,000 each. The fund sunsets after 5 years and eligibility for its benefits are carefully defined in the bill. This legislation is not about charity—and it is not about making everything all right for the victims. Certainly \$125,000 is only a very small down payment on the staggering emotional and financial costs that hemophilia-associated AIDS places on its victims and their families. What this bill is about is the Federal Government owning up to a share of responsibility for what happened.

In 17 other developed countries where similar disasters occurred, national governments have stepped up to their obligations and established compensation programs. It's time for the United States to follow that lead. As this legislation moves through the process of consideration in this House, we will debate the extent of Government's obligation and the proper response to this tragedy. I know many of my colleagues are concerned about setting precedents and spending money. I share that concern—but I believe this is one of the things Government should appropriately be doing, responding to a tragedy that the Government had some responsibility to prevent. Of course, we look forward to the upcoming release of a thorough study conducted by the National Academy of Science's Insti-

tute of Medicine about what went wrong with the blood supply and how decisions about addressing those problems were made. Our legislation is in no way meant to prejudice or preclude that study, whose results should be available in May, nor do we have any interest in interfering with an ongoing legal process involving citizens and private industry. By presenting this bill to the House, we are simply acknowledging our commitment to the victims of this tragedy and our interest in seeing the Federal Government take action. I urge my colleagues to join us in this effort.

□ 1510

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 2 AND HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 24

Mr. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be withdrawn as a cosponsor of House Joint Resolution 2 and House Joint Resolution 24.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BATEMAN). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nebraska?

There was no objection.

COMMEMORATING BLACK HISTORY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BATEMAN). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. TUCKER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity today, as we commemorate Black History Month, to thank some people. I want to thank them for their contribution to making America the great country that it is.

Now I won't get to them all today, and even if my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus stood here and helped me name them, we couldn't thank them all today, and even if all the Members of the U.S. House of Representatives, whose very lives have been affected by them, were here today to thank them, we couldn't thank them all. But I will, however, try to thank as many of them as possible.

First, I want to thank God, for mother Earth and the fruit of her African body.

I want to thank Crispus Attucks, who at the Boston Massacre in 1770, became the first man to die in the American Revolution. I want to thank him for his desire for freedom and his fight for American independence.

I want to thank Frederick Douglass, the great abolitionist who spoke passionately against slavery, for always knowing and speaking with a clear voice. That he was equal to any man, even when the reality seemed to be otherwise.

I want to thank Matilda Arabella Evans, who in 1872 became the first African-American woman to practice